

Hunt-Pollock Mill

HABS No. PA-170

South side of Race Street, off State Route 322

(Horseshoe Pike, Manor Avenue), on Beaver Creek  
(branch of Brandywine Creek)

Downingtown Borough

Chester County

Pennsylvania

HABS

PA

15-DOWT,

2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HUNT-POLLOCK MILL  
POLLOCK MILL

Location: U. S. Route #322, west edge of Downingtown Borough,  
Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: Mrs. William I. Pollock, 200 Race Street, Downingtown,  
Pennsylvania.

Brief Statement  
of Significance: This building, erected about 1752, was in continuous  
operation as a feed mill until the 1930's and has only  
been altered by the addition of a 20th-century office wing.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners:

1. William Penn 1681 to William Isaac et al. 2000 acres.
2. William Isaac et al. 1685 and 1686 to Daniel Smith.
3. Daniel Smith by will to son Daniel Smith, Jr.
4. Daniel Smith to John Smith by descent.
5. John Smith by his attorneys 1723 to George Aston.
6. George Aston died 1738 and his widow and children sold  
1739 to Roger Hunt (who had married Esther, a daughter of  
the said George Aston) Mill mentioned 1752 on his land.
7. Roger Hunt died intestate ca 1764 and the place was sold  
to William Hunt, his fourth child. - This deed 1767 mentions  
a "Water Corn or Grist Mill."
8. John Morton, sheriff, seized mill of William Hunt 1767  
and sold it to James Webb.
9. James Webb 1793 to Samuel Haines. The place is described  
in the 1798 direct tax of the dept. of Internal Revenue  
as the property of this Samuel Haines.
10. Samuel Haines 1810 to Robert Roberts.
11. Robert Roberts 1814 to Samuel Miller.
12. Samuel Miller 1838 to James McConnell.
13. James McConnell 1846 to Samuel Ringwalt.
14. Samuel Ringwalt died in 1875 and the title passed in time  
to Abiah P. Ringwalt.
15. Abiah P. Ringwalt 1894 to John T. Pollock.
16. John T. Pollock 1911 to William Irwin Pollock, Jr., a  
grandson.
17. William Irwin Pollock, Jr. 1956 to his widow, Elizabeth D.  
Pollock.

2. Date of erection: 1752 or earlier.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: Unknown.
4. Original plans, construction etc.: None known.

5. Notes on alterations and additions: No additions were ever made to it until this century. The machinery had been changed a number of times. It was last used as a feed mill in the 1930's. A very modern one-story frame addition to the north side is 20th century.

6. Important old views and references:

Views: Wilmer W. MacElres: Down the Eastern and Up the Black Brandywine. 1906. Plates facing pages 115 and 116 have excellent pictures as the mill was first built before the office of the 1920's to the north.

References: Sources of information: Clipping and manuscript files in the Chester County Historical Society under the heading - Downingtown. Business Houses- Hunt Mill, Pollock Mill; and deeds and wills in the Court House, West Chester, Pa.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: Stone mill erected by 1759 and in continuous operation, without additions, until the mid-1920's when a modern office was built to the north, in place of the original office on the lowest level, with a fireplace in the N.E. corner.

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: None known.

D. Supplemental Material

1. Court House, West Chester, Pa. - Clerk of Courts Office.  
Original Road Papers, Vol. 6 #48:

"To the Court of General Quarter Sessions to be held at Chester on the 25th Day of Novr. 1752. Pursuant to an Order of the last Court of General Quarter Seseione We the Subscribers hereunto Have Viewed & as occasion manifestly appeared to us Have laid out & surveyed that part of little Conestoga Road that leads from the Proprietors Mannor of Springton thro the township of East Caln to the Provincial Road near the Mill of Thomas Downing in manner following/ to wit/ Beginning at the Provincial Road that leads from Paxtang toward Philadelphia a little within the line of the said Mannor thence South 55 Degrees East at 27 perches cross sd Manor line...Thence South 29 /degrees/ East 24 /perches/ thence South 84 /degrees/ East 32 perches Near to Roger Hunt's Mill..."

2. "Pennsylvania Gazette", 9 - 13 - 1759, p. 3, col. 3:

"East Caln, Chester County, September 1(?). 1759.

"To be LETT for a Term of YEARS,

"A large commodious Mill, three Stories high, situate on a Branch of Brandywine Creek, in the Township of East Caln afore-said, about 24 Miles from Chester, and 34 from Philadelphia, near the Meeting of the Provincial Roads from Philadelphia to Lancaster, and towards Harris's Ferry, on Susquehanna, convenient for purchasing Wheat, Also a Saw-mill

and a Pair of Timber Wheels, all in good order; the Grist-mill is well provided with Conveniences for making Flour, viz two Pair of Stones, three Boulting-cloths, and all other necessities for a Mill. Also 14 Acres of good Meadow and Pasture. Any person inclining to rent, may know the Terms, by applying to

Roger Hunt."

3. "Village Record" - 2-7-1860:

RINGWALT'S MILLS.  
DOWNINGTOWN, PENNA.

"The subscriber, having thoroughly repaired his Mills at considerable expense, and fitted them up with the best improved machinery, and employed experienced and accommodating millers, is prepared to give general satisfaction in grinding all kinds of grain. Thankful for past favors, he respectfully solicits the patronage of the public in future.

"FLOUR, MILL FEED, PLASTER AND GROUND ONES, always on hand and for sale.

"Also, a superior Super-Phosphate of Lime, manufactured out of the Columbian Guano.

"Price -- \$40.00 per Ton, in barrels.

"The highest cash price paid for all kinds of Grain, or taken in exchange for Guano, Plaster, Bones, or Super-Phosphate.

Saml. Ringwalt.

"Jul. 30, 1859. Ringwalt's Mills, Downingtown, Pa."

4. "Chester County Democrat" - 1-3-1895:

"MILL PROPERTY IMPROVED. -- The old Ringwalt mill, which stands on the edge of Downingtown, now owned by J. Y. Pollock, has been greatly improved by the addition of an entirely new equipment of machinery and apparatus, consisting of ~~roller~~ process machinery, which will in the future be propelled by a new turbine water wheel, now being placed in position."

Prepared by Bart Anderson - May 1959  
Curator, Chester County Historical Society

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: Although the machinery has been replaced a number of times, no additions were made to the mill itself until a one-story office wing was added in the mid-1920's

2. Condition of Fabric: Poor to fair.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: Three and one-half stories;  
30'6" by 48'.
2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction: Stone.
4. Chimneys: Stone chimney in the N.E. corner for the  
original fireplace in the office.
5. Openings
  - a. Doorways and doors: Original openings.
  - b. Windows and shutters: Original, except for the dormer  
to the south.
6. Roof
  - a. Shape, covering: Wood shingles.
  - b. Dormers: One dormer to the south, not original.

C. Technical Description of Interiors

1. Floor Plans: Little changed except for moving the office from  
the original N.E. corner to the 20th century addition on the  
north side.
2. Stairways: Original.
3. Flooring: Original, except for repairs.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Rough.
5. Doorways and doors: Openings original.
6. Trim: None.
7. Hardware: Some original.
8. Lighting: None.
9. Heating: Only original fireplace is in the office.

D. Site

1. General Setting and orientation: Mill faces east; in setting  
showing dam, race etc.

2. Enclosures: None.
3. Outbuildings: Early stone house, and log house nearby.
4. Walks, driveways etc.: None.
5. Landscaping, gardens etc.: None.

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